

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. §1.111
Application No. 10/501,886
Attorney Docket No. 042599

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are pending. Claim 1 is amended herein. Support for the amendments is found at page 4, lines 9-24 and Fig. 3.

Applicants' Response to the Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-3, 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chiang (5,328,332) in view of Guida et al. (5,336,050). In response thereto, applicants have amended claims 1 and 3 to more distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. Specifically, applicants have added the feature that the step portion of the main plate has a sharp angle on a surface of the main plate and a slant portion on an opposite surface. Neither Chiang nor Guida teach or suggest this feature of the present invention. Further, even if the references are combined they would not result in the claimed invention.

The Office cites to Chiang for its teaching of channels 24 and 25 formed in a top plate 2 for a wheel fan. These channels 24 and 25 are produced in the top plate 2 to embed convey rings 14 and 15 which are set on top of the fan blades 12. See col. 2, lines 8-18. The Office maintains that these channels 24 and 25 are equivalent to the step portion of claim 1 and would form a gap as required thereby.

These channels 24 and 25 described in Chiang are not equivalent to the step portion of amended claims 1 and 3 so as to constitute means for forming a gap between stacked plates. As described in Chiang, the channels 24 and 25 are formed to accept the conveyor rings 14 and 15

which are fastened to the blades. As such, the channels must be smooth to accommodate the rings.

Contrary, in the present invention, the step portion is formed by drawing so as to create a sharp angle to form the step portion 14 on the upper surface of the main plate 10. As illustrated in Fig. 3, the sharp angle of the step portion is the only contact point between the stacked plates 10.

Since the channels of Chiang's top plate are smooth, they will fit into each other upon top plates being stacked. Hence, portions of the stacked top plates would be in contact. Thus, assuming, arguendo, that the skilled artisan removed the bosses from the top plates, and stacked the multiple top plates, portions of the plates other than the channels would be in contact. For this reason, the modified top plate of Chiang would not constitute the invention of amended claims 1 and 3, which requires that only the sharp angled step portions of adjacent main plates are contacted.

Wherefore, applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to claims 1 and 3 clearly remove Chiang as a reference because as noted above, the channels in the top plate must be smooth to accommodate the rings.

Claims 4-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chiang in view of Guida et al. as applied to claims 1 and 3 above and in further view of Brock (2,228,750). As the rejection depends on the rejection of claims 1 and 3, by addressing these rejections, as

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discussed above, applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 4-6 are likewise addressed based on the claims' dependencies.

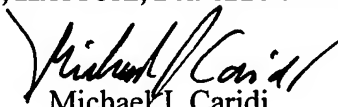
In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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